

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT VELASCO'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. ON NOV 27, PRESIDENT VELASCO HELD ANOTHER OF HIS MARATHON PRESS CONFERENCES; THIS ONE LASTED TWO HOURS AND 45 MINUTES. HIGHLIGHTS, BASED ON THE ABRIDGED, OFFICIAL VERSION PUBLISHED IN EL PERUANO, FOLLOW.

2. CIA. VELASCO ACCUSED HIS INTERNAL ENEMIES (E.G. A GROUP OF LAWYERS AND JOURNALISTS) OF TRYING TO UNDERMINE THE REVOLUTION BY CHALLENGING THE PERU-JAPAN PIPELINE FINANCING AGREEMENT. ASKED ABOUT EXTERNAL FOES, HE REPLIED: "THERE IS SOMETHING THAT CANNOT BE SEEN BUT CAN BE FELT. THERE IS POWER, THERE IS MONEY, THERE ARE COORDINATING ELEMENTS. IT COULD WELL BE THE CIA, AS ITS CHIEF OPENLY HAS TOLD THE WORLD, WHICH HAS ACTED ALREADY IN OTHER COUNTRIES. WE ARE VIGILANT. IF WE DISCOVER THEM, WE WILL FALL ON THEM."

3. NEW MINISTERS. PERHAPS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ANNOUNCEMENT WAS VELASCO'S STATEMENT THAT ADMIRAL GUILLERMO FAURA WOULD REPLACE RETIRING ADMIRAL ARCE AS NAVY MINISTER (AND MEMBER OF THE RULING JUNTA). VELASCO THEREBY CONFIRMED REPORTS THAT HE WOULD SKIP OVER MORE SENIOR ADMIRALS IN ORDER TO GET THE MAN HE WANTS AS NAVY MINISTER.

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MINISTER. THE ANNOUNCEMENT VIRTUALLY CONFIRMED THE RECENT RUMORS

THAT SEVERAL MODERATE SENIOR ADMIRALS WILL BE RETIRED AT THE END OF THE YEAR. THE PRESIDENT REITERATED THAT GENERAL MORALES BERMUDEZ WILL BECOME PRIME MINISTER ON FEB 1, UPON GENERAL MERCADO'S RETIREMENT. HE SAID THAT LIMA MILITARY INSTRUCTION CENTER (CIMP) COMMANDER MIRANDA AMPUERO WILL BECOME MINISTER OF EDUCATION REPLACING RETIRING GENERAL CARPIO BEKURRA. HE CONFIRMED THAT ARMORED DIVISION COMMANDER HOYOS WILL BECOME FOOD MINISTER AND CONFIRMED THE POSSIBILITY THAT LABOR MINISTER SALA OROSCO (WHO RETIRES FROM THE AIR FORCE ON NOV. 28) MIGHT BECOME SINAMOS CHIEF.

4. REVOLUTION VS. CONSTITUTION. "THE CONSITUTION WILL BE RESPECTED AS LONG AS IT IS NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE REVOLUTION" A REVOLUTION "CANNOT DETAIN ITS PROGRESS BEFORE SUCH AN OBSOLETE AND IGNORED CONSTITUTION AS OURS WHICH REFLECTS. . . (THE CONDITIONS OF) 1933." VELESCO ADDED THAT EVENTUALLY THERE WOULD BE A NEW CONSTITUION REFLECTING "THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER."

5. TERRORISM. THE PRESIDENT DENIED THAT THE SCHOOL YEAR HAD BEEN CUT SHORT FOR POLITICAL REASONS. (DESPITE THIS ASSERTION, HOWEVER, IT IS ASSUMED GENERALLY THAT CLASSES WERE SUSPENDED AS OF DEC 6 IN ORDER TO DISPERSE STUDENTS WHO MIGHT DEMONSTRATE AGAINST VISITING HEADS OF STATE, PARTICULARLY PRESIDENT PINOCHET OF CHILE. FOREIGN DELEGATIONS WILL BE COMING TO LIMA FOR CELEBRATIONS MARKING THE DEC. 9 SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE BATTLE OF AYACUCHO.) VELASCO ATTRIBUTED THE SCHOOL CLOSURE TO THE NEED TO INSPECT AND REPAIR EARTHQUAKE DAMAGES SUFFERED BY SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENTS ON OCT. 3. REFERRING TO RECENT BOMBINGS INCIDENTS, PARTICULARLY AN EXPLOSION IN SERARS DOWNTOWN STORE, VELASCO CALLED THE TERRORISTS COWARDS. HE DECLARED THAT THE REVOLUTION WANTS TO AVOID VIOLENCE BUT IF "THE COUNTERREVOLUTION INITIATES IT, THEIR LEADERS WILL PAY THE CONSEQUENCES."

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